



Committee on Homeland Security

Democrats

**Bennie G. Thompson, Ranking
Member**

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CONGRESSMAN THOMPSON CALLS FOR FULL FUNDING FOR THE NATION'S FIRST RESPONDERS

April 21, 2005, Washington, DC — Congressman Bennie G. Thompson (D-MS), Ranking Member of the House Committee on Homeland Security, made the following statement during the full committee markup of the first responders bill, "The Faster and Smarter Funding for First Responders Act of 2005," H.R. 1544:

"Ensuring that our first responders have adequate training, equipment and staffing to not only respond to the everyday hazards they face, but also to respond to potential terrorist attacks is one of the many issues our committee will consider. However, providing equipment and training is pointless when there are not enough law enforcement officers, firefighters and EMS personnel on the streets to prevent, prepare for, and respond to terrorist attacks." Thompson also underscored the need for grant funding in order to assist first responders in addressing personnel shortages.

H.R. 1544 would make certain that grant money is processed quickly to the first responders who need it most and would also ensure that firefighters, police, and emergency medical service personnel in every state in America have a minimum level of preparedness.

Thompson stated, **"As we move forward with a DHS authorization bill in the coming weeks, I also look forward to working with Chairman Cox on an authorization amount for the grant programs in H.R. 1544. It is important that this Committee is on record for supporting a funding level that will begin to adequately meet the needs of our first responders."**

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